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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fiftieth session
Item 3 of the provisional agenda

ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE SESSION

Post-sessional meetings of the Bureau of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on Human Rights

Note by the Secretariat

1. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/48, in which the Council decided that "in the week following the session of the Commission on Human Rights, the Bureau shall meet to make suggestions about the organization of the work of the Commission, including the effective use of conference time and facilities", the Bureau of the forty-ninth session of the Commission had three post-sessional meetings, which were held on 15 and 17 March and 28 April 1993 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

2. The agenda of the meetings included items relating to the appointment of special rapporteurs/representatives, experts and members of working groups; consultations with the Chairman of the forty-fourth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities; implementation of some of the resolutions adopted by the Commission at its forty-ninth session; rationalization of the work of the Commission and some other matters.

3. With regard to the question of appointments, the Chairman of the Commission, after holding consultations with members of the Bureau and the regional groups in the Commission and taking into account the requirements of competence, experience and independence as well as equitable geographical representation, has since appointed seven special rapporteurs of the

Commission with mandates relating to the questions of racism, torture, religious intolerance, freedom of opinion and expression, and the human rights situation in the Sudan, Equatorial Guinea and in the occupied Arab territories. Also, 15 experts nominated by Governments were appointed to the Working Group on the Right to Development, established under Commission resolution 1993/22. The Chairman also made recommendations with regard to the nomination of Special Representatives of the Secretary-General for Cambodia and Somalia.

4. The Bureau held consultations with the Chairman of the forty-fourth session of the Sub-Commission, Mr. Miguel Alfonso Martínez, who made a statement describing the recent activities of the Sub-Commission aimed at rationalization of its work. The discussion that followed related mostly to the question of how to achieve better coordination of work of the Sub-Commission and the Commission to avoid duplication and unnecessary overlapping, especially with regard to monitoring the violations of human rights in specific countries.

5. The Bureau also considered certain issues relating to the implementation of some of the decisions of the Commission, in particular its resolution 1993/47 on human rights and thematic procedures, paragraph 11 of which provides for the possibility of convening a meeting of all the thematic special rapporteurs and Chairmen of working groups of the Commission in order to enable an exchange of views and closer cooperation. Members of the Bureau agreed that the Centre for Human Rights should give priority attention to the implementation of Commission resolution 1993/58 on effective functioning of human rights mechanisms, in particular paragraph 2. The Bureau also noted the importance of implementing the provisions of Commission resolution 1993/94 on documentation and appointments for the orderly conduct of business at future sessions of the Commission.

6. At its meetings, the Bureau considered extensively the item on the rationalization of the work of the Commission. The discussion concentrated mainly on the question of how the Bureau could contribute to the better organization of the Commission's work with a view to its rationalization. Several proposals were put forward for finding the proper means to discuss the matters relating to the rationalization of the work of the Commission which included:

(a) Preparing a questionnaire to be sent to States members of the Commission as well as to observer Governments and international organizations, including non-governmental organizations. It was suggested that such a questionnaire should in particular refer to questions of documentation, time management, reform of the agenda and methods of work;

(b) Convening a special session of the Commission on Human Rights to discuss matters relating to the rationalization of its work;

(c) Establishing for that purpose an inter-sessional working group of the Commission;

(d) Establishing a sessional working group of the Commission;

(e) Convening an extended (enlarged) Bureau meeting; and

(f) Pursuing informal consultations between Permanent Missions in Geneva.

7. It was decided that Bureau members should continue consultations with their regional groups with a view to collecting information, comments and suggestions regarding the issue of the rationalization of the work of the Commission. The Secretariat was requested to provide the Bureau with statistical data relating to the proceedings of the forty-ninth session of the Commission which could be instrumental in the future action on this matter.

8. The statistical data collected by the Centre for Human Rights is reproduced in the annex to the present document.

ANNEX

Statistical data relating to the work of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on Human Rights

I. UTILIZATION OF CONFERENCE RESOURCES

Number of meetings planned:	60	(plus 34 additional meetings)
Number of meetings held:	69	(93, if informal meetings with interpretation are included)
Additional meetings used*:	3	plenary meetings extended to the equivalent of 6 additional meetings;
	1	additional meeting for the working group (item 23)
Total duration of meetings:	260 h 25 min	
Overtime (beyond normal three-hour limit):	1 h 30 min	
Number of meetings cancelled:	1 (3 h)	
Hours lost (total):	23 h 5 min	
- through late starting:	2 h 55 min	
- through early ending:	17 h 10 min	

II. DOCUMENTATION

Number of documents issued:	558	(documents of working groups not included)
Total number of pages printed		
- in one language (English):	7 330	
- in all six languages:	38 000	(approximately)

III. ATTENDANCE

	Delegations	Persons registered
States members of the Commission:	53	424
Observer Governments:	84	384
United Nations bodies:	9	24
Specialized agencies:	4	21
Intergovernmental and other organizations:	10	33
National liberation movements:	3	7
Non-governmental organizations (total):	158	757
- Category I:	18	64
- Category II:	103	613
- Roster:	37	180
	Total: 479	Total: 1 650

* Post-sessional Bureau meetings not included.

IV. STATEMENTS*

States members of the Commission**:	280
Observer Governments**:	124
United Nations bodies:	2
Specialized agencies:	2
Intergovernmental and other organizations:	8
National liberation movements:	5
Non-governmental organizations:	374
Special rapporteurs/representatives/ experts/chairpersons:	26
Rights of reply:	111
Guest speakers ("dignitaries"):	23
Total:	955

V. DECISIONS

Resolutions adopted:	98
Decisions adopted:	16
Draft proposals withdrawn:	5
Consideration of draft proposals postponed:	0

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* Statements made during the general discussion of agenda items 4 to 28.

** Statements made during six meetings held in closed session (item 12 (b)) not included.